

European conference

Which Common Policy for Agriculture and Rural Areas beyond 2013?

Wednesday 16 September 2009 – 10.00am-4.30pm

Sibelius Hall

Finland House Conference

Snickarbacken 4, 111 83 Stockholm, SWEDEN

In 2008 the World experienced both the return of the spectre of food shortages and the collapse of financial markets. But these events did not cause a revolution in thinking among farming specialists of the kind seen in other economic sectors and in the banking world, where there was much talk of renewed market regulation. Surprisingly, agriculture and the common agricultural policy – so often the subject of passionate debate in Europe – seem to have escaped this reappraisal. It is true that the debate on agricultural regulation is weighed down by past experience, in particular concerning the cost of surpluses and stocks before 1992.

Despite the process of continual reform launched by Ray MacSharry and pursued by each of his successors, the CAP remains the object of lively criticism. It has been judged inequitable, costly and poorly adapted to needs, and it is often accused of being incoherent with the objectives of other EU policies. These observations are constantly repeated by the CAP's detractors. Rarely are they followed up by in-depth debate – much needed by the EU – on the role of agriculture and rural development, and their regulation.

The CAP is the subject of questioning, but the future of European agricultural regulation will not be determined until the conclusion of negotiations on the financial perspectives beyond 2013. These negotiations, to take place in 2011 and 2012, will define the budget allocated to the CAP, and thus the EU's capacity to regulate markets during crises and to remunerate agricultural services which are not remunerated by the market (amenities). These debates, led in parallel by the ECOFIN, agriculture and general affairs committees, worry supporters of a strong common policy – who remember the depressing battles, waged between member states in previous budget negotiations, over the numbers involved in national contributions.

To prevent the CAP – a weakened EU policy in terms of legitimacy – from becoming the victim of budgetary trade-offs, European farm ministers have been leading an exhaustive debate on the post-2013 future of agricultural policy. Little known to the public, this debate has been in progress since the opening of the troika of French, Czech and Swedish presidencies of the EU. It takes place during informal agricultural Council meetings and contributes to the discussion of the major issues currently dealt with by the CAP. The debate is helping to define a renewed policy adapted to medium-term challenges, and ultimately to defend an agricultural budget on the basis of a new political project. The debate is a long way from generating a consensus: the current troika members show three different – even incompatible – approaches.

Commissioner Mariann Fischer-Boël recently launched a discussion to reconsider the architecture of direct payments, with a view to rethinking the philosophy of agricultural regulation within the EU. Member state farm ministers debated this point in May and June. The debate will be pursued under the Swedish EU presidency. The European Commission will present a communication to launch a public debate on this theme during the summer or early autumn of 2010. In mid-2011 the Commission will formulate legislative proposals concerning the future of agricultural direct payments, at the same time as the proposals for the post-2013 financial perspectives. In this way debates will sketch out the future of the CAP post-2013.

Notre Europe and *SIEPS* (Swedish Institute of European Policy Studies) are therefore inviting specialists, political decision-makers, Commission officials and researchers to discuss the question, "What regulation of agriculture and rural areas beyond 2013?" These think tanks are inviting representatives of the Swedish EU presidency and the Commission to present their vision of the future, before launching a two-stage reflection exercise on the policy's current role and its post-2013 evolution.

Programme

9.30-9.50	Registration
10.00-10.05	Welcome
10.05-10.30	Opening Speech Eskil ERLANDSSON , <i>Swedish Minister for Agriculture, President of the European Council of Agriculture</i>
10.30-12.30	First session The role of the Common Agricultural Policy in European integration Moderator: Mats HALLGREN, journalist, Svenska Dagbladet Olof BOLIN , Professor, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences <i>“The role of a common agricultural policy in a common market. Past and present.”</i> Csaba CSÁKI , Economist, Head of department, former rector, Corvinus University of Budapest <i>“Impacts of European integration on the agriculture of Central and Eastern European Countries”</i> Marjorie JOUEN , Advisor, Notre Europe <i>“Merits and limits of the European rural development Strategy.”</i>
12.30-1.00	Floor discussion
1.00-2.00	Lunch
2.00-3.30	Second session Improving the European regulation of agriculture beyond 2013 Moderator: Anna STRÖM MELIN, EU journalist Louis-Pascal MAHÉ , Pr. Emeritus at Agrocampus Rennes, Notre Europe <i>“A new payment scheme and a renovated governance for the CAP beyond 2013”</i> Ewa RABINOWCZ , Swedish Institute for Food and Agricultural Economics, Research Director <i>“Which common policy, which budget to cope with the new challenges?”</i> David BALDOCK , Executive Director, Institute for European Environmental Policy <i>“Which European Strategy for Environment and Agriculture?”</i> Thierry de L’ESCAILLE , General Secretary, European Landowners <i>“A renewed ambition for a new CAP”</i>
3.30-4.00	Floor discussion
4.00-4.30	Conclusion Mariann FISCHER BOËL , <i>European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development</i>

Reference documents:

“CAP reform beyond 2013: An idea for a longer view”, Jean-Christophe BUREAU and Louis-Pascal MAHÉ, *Notre Europe*, May 2008.

http://www.notre-europe.eu/uploads/tx_publication/Etude64-CAP-Propositions-EN_01.pdf

“The Need for Reform and a Sustainable Design for a Future CAP”, Ewa Rabinowicz, SIEPS, 2009

For information concerning the venue, please contact:

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Notre Europe

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Registration to attend the conference:

Please send your name, surname, function and institution to: info@sieps.se